

Amendments to the Specification:

Please amend the abstract as follows:

~~Novel platform molecules and polymerizable mesogens made therefrom; novel synthetic pathways for making such platform molecules and polymerizable mesogens.~~

A method for producing platform molecules comprising: providing a first phenylene ring comprising a first functional group at a para-position to a second functional group; providing a second phenylene ring comprising a third functional group at a para- position to a fourth functional group; providing a third phenylene ring comprising a desired substituent and comprising a first functionality at a para- position to a second functionality; and forming a mixture comprising the first phenylene rings, the second phenylene rings, and the third phenylene rings; exposing the mixture to conditions effective to react the second functional group with the first functionality to produce a first ester bond, the conditions being effective to react the third functional group with the second functionality to produce a second ester bond, producing platform molecules comprising terminal groups comprising the first functional group at position para- to the first ester bond and the fourth functional group at a position para- to the second ester bond, the conditions producing terminal groups comprising other than polymerizable groups, one or more of the terminal groups comprising an alkoxy moiety selected from the group consisting of HO-(CH₂)_n-O- groups, Cl(CH₂)_n-O- groups, Br(CH₂)_n-O- groups, I(CH₂)_n-O-, and reactive derivatives thereof, wherein n is from about 2 to about 12 and CH₂ independently is selected from the group consisting of CH₂ which is unsubstituted and CH₂ which is substituted by an element selected from the group consisting of oxygen, sulfur, and an ester group; provided that at least 2 carbon atoms separate the oxygen or the ester group; wherein, when both of the first functional group and the fourth functional group comprise polymerizable groups, the desired substituent provides sufficient steric hindrance to achieve a nematic state at room temperature while suppressing crystallinity at room temperature.